

INTERNATIONAL LABOR RIGHTS FORUM

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Freedom to Organize at Work Worldwide Recognized on Labor Day

ILRF releases “Freedom at Work” [toolkit](#) focused on one of the most widely violated human rights

Across the country as people celebrate Labor Day, workers around the world continue to face obstacles as they try to create a better life for themselves and their families. The global economic crisis has deeply affected workers who face massive job losses, plunging millions of families into poverty and leading to questions about the sustainability of our economic policies. At the same time, many workers are experiencing violations of their right to organize labor unions to protect their interests.

Bama Athreya, Executive Director of the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF), said, “The global economic crisis has led to an increase in discrimination, child labor and precarious forms of work. Many companies have used the crisis as an excuse to further erode workers’ rights and, without a voice in the workplace, many workers are left with few social protections to make ends meet. Now more than ever, we must ensure that workers’ right to organize is protected globally.”

Workers around the world face systematic barriers to organizing, including egregious acts of violence and intimidation. In light of the disturbing state of organizing rights, **ILRF has created a [new toolkit](#) to help people understand the importance of protecting the freedom of association for workers.** The toolkit is also part of the launch of ILRF’s new campaign to protect the right of workers to organize called “Freedom at Work.” The toolkit provides background information on how union rights related to other human rights and social justice issues and includes a list of ten strategies employers use to bust unions. The toolkit also has a series of case studies of violations of the right to organize including stories of violence against unionists in Colombia, organizing rights violations of Dole pineapple workers in the Philippines, abuses against women producing apparel for Russell (Fruit of the Loom) in Honduras, the use of temporary workers at a Lipton tea facility in Pakistan and more.

ILRF has been working for nearly 25 years to defend labor rights and create a just and humane world for workers. Over the years, ILRF has seen that **worker empowerment is the answer to ending child labor and discrimination and to improving working conditions, wages and social protections for all workers.** The toolkit also builds on an annual report ILRF releases on International Human Rights

Day, December 10th, highlighting the worst global corporations for the freedom of association. The new *Freedom at Work* toolkit will help labor right supporters to educate their friends, family, co-workers and community members about worker organizing.

The *Freedom at Work Toolkit* is available online here: <http://www.laborrights.org/freedom-at-work/resources/I2095>

The *International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF)* is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just and human treatment for workers worldwide. For more information, please visit www.LaborRights.org.

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